

News



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 6, 2013

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West Nile Virus on the Rise in Connecticut

Twelve towns have identified mosquitoes with West Nile virus so far this season

Hartford – The State Mosquito Management Program today announced mosquitoes testing positive for West Nile virus (WNV) have been identified in twelve towns so far this season. The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) trapped the positive mosquitoes in Bridgeport, East Haven, Fairfield, Glastonbury, Greenwich, Manchester, New Haven, Norwalk, Plainfield, Stamford, Stratford, and Westport.

“As expected, we continue to find mosquitoes infected with West Nile virus in more locations in lower Fairfield County and in other areas of Connecticut,” said Dr. Theodore G. Andreadis, Chief Medical Entomologist, CAES. “Over the rest of the summer and into early fall, we expect to see further build-up of West Nile virus with increased risk for human infection throughout the state, especially in densely populated communities where the virus is found.”

“Historically in Connecticut August and September are the months when risk of West Nile virus infections is greatest,” said Dr. Randall Nelson, State Public Health Veterinarian with the Department of Public Health. “Everyone should take steps to prevent mosquito bites, such as using insect repellent and covering bare skin, especially during dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.”

Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) has also been identified in two pools of mosquitoes trapped in the Patchuag State Forest in Voluntown on July 10 and 17. Since then all mosquitoes trapped at the same site have tested negative. On July 31, the Mosquito Management Program hosted a statewide conference call with municipal officials to provide information on WNV and EEE monitoring efforts and results.

Monitoring and risk assessment for WNV emphasizes mosquito trapping and testing results. The CAES maintains a network of 91 mosquito-trapping stations in 72 municipalities throughout the state. Mosquito traps are set Monday – Thursday nights at each site every ten days on a rotating basis. Mosquitoes are grouped (pooled) for testing according to species, collection site, and date. Each pool is tested for the presence of viruses of public health importance. Positive findings are reported to local health departments and on the CAES web site at www.ct.gov/caes.

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For information on West Nile virus including most recent mosquito testing results, human cases, and what can be done to prevent getting bitten by mosquitoes, visit the Connecticut Mosquito Management Program Web site at www.ct.gov/mosquito.

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